

§103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinnard in view of Kobayashi or in view of Lind et al. and Claims 61-67 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinnard in view of Kobayashi or in view of Lind et al.

Claims 32, 59, 60 and 70 have been amended herein. These claim amendments find clear support in the original specification, claims and drawings. For example, amended Claims 32, 59, 60 and 70 are supported by Figures 1-12. Hence, no new matter is believed to be added thereby. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language.

Briefly recapitulating, amended Claim 32 of the present invention is directed to a camera including a substantially flat body having a plane direction and a thickness direction, the substantially flat body being thinner in the thickness direction, the plane direction being substantially perpendicular to the thickness direction, photographing means for performing a photographing operation, the photographing means being positioned in the substantially flat body such that the photographing means has a photographing optical axis substantially parallel to the plane direction of the substantially flat body, and a plurality of activating means each for activating the photographing operation of the photographing means, the plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions. By providing such activating means, the body can be held more securely by a user taking a photograph, and the camera is more adaptable to various photographing conditions, thereby preventing shaking and burred image more effectively.¹

¹ See, for example, Specification, Paragraphs [0021] and [0030].

Kinnard discloses a camera. Nevertheless, Kinnard does not teach “a plurality of activating means each for activating the photographing operation of the photographing means, the plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions” as recited in amended Claim 32. On the other hand, Kinnard discloses the cylindrical shaped body 26, not a substantially flat body having a plane direction and a thickness direction, the substantially flat body being thinner in the thickness direction, the plane direction being substantially perpendicular to the thickness direction. The film chamber 2 is flat but does not have the plurality of activating means provided in the plane and thickness directions nor the photographing means being accommodated therein such that a photographing optical axis is substantially parallel to the plane direction of the substantially flat body. As such, the structure recited in amended Claim 32 is clearly distinguishable from Kinnard.

Likewise, both Kobayashi and Lind et al. disclose cameras, but neither one of them teaches “a plurality of activating means each for activating the photographing operation of the photographing means, the plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions.” as recited in amended Claim 32. Therefore, the structure recited in amended Claim 32 is also distinguishable from Kobayashi and Lind et al.

Because none of Kinnard, Kobayashi and Lind et al. discloses the plurality of activating means as recited in Claim 32, even the combined teachings of these cited references would not render the structure recited in Claim 32 obvious.

In addition, Claims 59 and 70 have been amended to include subject matter substantially similar to what is recited in amended Claim 32 to the extent discussed above. Thus, Claims 59 and 70 are also believed to be distinguishable from Kinnard, Kobayashi and Lind et al.

For the foregoing reasons, Claims 32, 59 and 70 are believed to be allowable.

Furthermore, since Claims 60-67 ultimately depend from Claim 59, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 60-67 are believed to be allowable as well.

In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Finally, the attention of the Patent Office is directed to the change of address of Applicant's representative, effective January 6, 2003:

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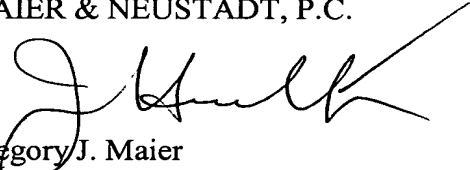
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Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 32, 59, 60 and 70 as follows:

--32. (Amended) A camera comprising:

a [camera body having a] substantially flat [shape] body having a plane direction and a thickness direction, the substantially flat body being thinner in the thickness direction, the plane direction being substantially perpendicular to the thickness direction;

photographing means for performing a photographing operation, the photographing means being accommodated in the [camera] substantially flat body and having a photographing optical axis substantially parallel to the plane direction of the substantially flat body; and

a plurality of activating means each for activating the photographing operation of the photographing means, the plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions.

59. (Amended) A portable apparatus comprising:

[an apparatus body having] a substantially flat [shape] body having a plane direction and a thickness direction, the substantially flat body being thinner in the thickness direction, the plane direction being substantially perpendicular to the thickness direction;

a photographing optical system configured to perform a photographing operation and [accommodated] positioned in the [apparatus] substantially flat body such that the

photographing optical system has a photographing optical axis substantially parallel to the plane direction of the substantially flat body; and

a plurality of release buttons each configured to activate the photographing operation of the photographing optical system.

60. (Amended) The portable apparatus of Claim 59, wherein:

[the photographing optical system has a photographing optical axis in a direction perpendicular to a thickness direction of the apparatus body and a photographing object side plane, the photographing object side plane facing an object to be photographed when photographing;]

the plurality of release buttons comprises a first and second release buttons; and

the first release button of the plurality of release buttons is provided on a side surface of the [apparatus] substantially flat body corresponding with [the] a photographing object side plane of the photographing optical system, and the second release button of the plurality of release buttons is provided on an upper surface of the [apparatus] substantially flat body, the upper surface facing upward when the photographing optical axis of the photographing optical system is horizontal and the photographing object side plane of the photographing optical system is directed toward the object.

70. (Amended) A portable apparatus comprising:

[an apparatus body having] a substantially flat [shape] body having a plane direction and a thickness direction, the substantially flat body being thinner in the thickness direction, the plane direction being substantially perpendicular to the thickness direction;

photographing means for performing a photographing operation, the photographing means being [accommodated] positioned in the [apparatus] substantially flat body such that the photographing means has a photographing optical axis substantially parallel to the plane direction of the substantially flat body; and

a plurality of activating means each for activating the photographing operation of the photographing means, the plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions.--